

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-07 MC-02 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /078 W

-----031052Z 051240 /16

R 030741Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 694

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEVEASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MPOL, KS, XB

SUBJECT: EDITORIAL ON US MILITARY WITHDRAWAL FROM KOREA

1. EVENING POST EDITORIAL JUNE 2 CITES PHILIPPINES AND ASEAN VIEW THAT STABILITY OF THE REGION WILL SUFFER WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF US FORCES FROM KOREA. EDITORIAL NOTES THAT ASEAN HAS ADJUSTED TO REALITY OF A DIMINISHED US MILITARY PRESENCE IN KOREA AND THAT THE REGION CAN NOW PREPARE FOR THE WORST WHILE MAPPING OUT A COURSE THAT WOULD PRESERVE REGIONAL STABILITY. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, POST EDITOR-IN-CHIEF POLOTAN IS CLOSE TO PALACE, PARTICULARLY MRS. MARCOS, AND HAS NOT BEEN NOTABLY FRIENDLY TO US. FULL TEXT FOLLOWS:

2. BEGIN TEXT. REPORTS ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF US GROUND TROOPS IN SOUTH KOREA HAVE BECOME THE CONCERN OF LEADERS IN ASIAN CAPITALS AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE UNTIL IT BECOMES FACT. AND THE INDICATIONS AT THIS TIME SHOW THAT THE PULLOUT OF US TROOPS IN THAT COUNTRY WILL SOON ENOUGH BECOME FACT.

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THE REACTIONS AT VARIOUS ASIAN CAPITALS HAVE BEEN MIXED, FOR EXAMPLE IN PEKING AND PYONGYANG THE WITHDRAWAL IS TAKEN IN STRIDE, THAT IS, NOT MUCH IS BEING SAID BUT THE IMPLICATION IS THAT IT IS WELCOME. IN OTHER CAPITALS, HOWEVER, SUCH AS TOKYO AND BANGKOK AND KUALA LUMPUR, AND INCLUDING SINGAPORE, THE REACTION IS QUITE DIFFERENT. THERE IS SOME APPREHENSION FELT, NOT SO MUCH ABOUT THE IMMEDIATE

DANGER THAT ANY ONE COUNTRY MIGHT FEEL BUT MORE OUT OF A REALIZATION OF THE DISRUPTIVE EFFECT IT WOULD HAVE ON THE PRESENT STABILIZED SITUATION IN THE REGION.

THE PHILIPPINES OF COURSE SHARES THE VIEW OF ITS NEIGHBORS, AND SPECIALLY OF ITS FELLOW MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH EAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN), THAT STABILITY OF THE REGION WILL SUFFER WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF US TROOPS FROM KOREA, MOSTLY BECAUSE A VACUUM WILL BE CREATED AND SOME MOVEMENT MUST OCCUR TO FILL THAT VACUUM. ANY SUCH MOVEMENT WILL DISTURB THE FINE BALANCE THAT NOW OBTAINS. AND IF THE DISTURBANCE IS STRONG ENOUGH, THE POSSIBILITY OF WAR MIGHT COME UP, SPECIALLY BECAUSE NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA ARE STILL IN A STATE OF HOSTILITY WITH ONLY THE PRESENCE OF US TROOPS AND THE DETERRENCE OF AMERICAN MILITARY POWER KEEPING THE PEACE INTACT.

BUT THE NEW US ADMINISTRATION APPEARS BENT ON WHITTILING DOWN THE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN ASIA, WITH THE PULLOUT OF US TROOPS FROM SOUTH KOREA GETTING FIRST PRIORITY. HOW DETERMINED THE US IS ON DOING THIS MAY BE SEEN FROM THE PEREMPTORY REASSIGNMENT OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF US FORCES IN KOREA, WHO HAS BOLDLY AND CATEGORICALLY STATED THAT WITHDRAWAL OF USG TROOPS FROM THAT AREA WOULD BE UNWISE. APART FROM THIS OUTSPOKEN OPPOSITION TO WASHINGTON'S POLICY IN THIS MATTER, THE GENERAL HAS NOT BEEN IN TROUBLE BEFORE, ENJOYS A SOLID REPUTATION AS A SOLDIER AND IS DEEMED MOST EFFECTIVE IN THE POST HE HAS RECENTLY VACATED.

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THE ASEAN ITSELF HAS ALREADY ADJUSTED TO THE REALITY OF A DIMINISHED US MILITARY PRESENCE IN KOREA. IN ITS FORTHCOMING SUMMIT TO DISCUSS REGIONAL COOPERATION, THE ASEAN WILL CONSIDER THE AMERICAN WITHDRAWAL AS ALREADY AN ESTABLISHED FACT. IT IS BETTER THIS WAY FOR THEN THE REGION CAN PREPARE FOR THE WORST WHILE MAPPING OUT A COURSE THAT WOULD AT LEAST PRESERVE THE STABILITY OF THE REGION. IT WILL TAKE SOME DOING, BUT IT IS A TASK THAT MUST BE DONE SOMEHOW. END TEXT.  
STULL

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, COLLECTIVE SECURITY, TEXT, TROOP REDUCTIONS  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
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**Office:** ACTION EA  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** EDITORIAL ON US MILITARY WITHDRAWAL FROM KOREA  
**TAGS:** MPOL, MARR, SOPN, KS, XB, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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